

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3009

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 2490

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OEXC, EEWT, RO

SUBJECT: PREPARATION FOR VISIT OF CEAUSESCU PARTY: DUMITRU

POPESCU

REF: STATE 132185

1. DESPITE SHORT TIME AVAILABLE, A MEETING BETWEEN POPESCU AND APPROPRIATE STATE AND USIA OFFICIALS COULD BE USEFUL OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE OUR CULTURAL RELATIONS. FOLLOWING ARE OUR COMMENTS IN ORDER POSED IN REFTEL:

A. AS HEAD OF THE TOP PARTY/STATE CULTURAL ORGANIZATION POPESCU IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICY PROGRAM AND IDEOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF LITERATURE AND PUBLISHING, PERFORMING IN CREATIVE ARTS, FOREIGN CULTURAL RELATIONS, "MASS CULTURAL EDUCATION" (I.E. OUTSIDE THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM) AND MUSEUMS. THE IDEOLOGICAL PART OF HIS JOB OVERLAPS AND CONFLICTS WITH THAT OF RCP SECRETARY BUTICA WHO HAS BEEN REGARDED AS POPESCU'S RIVAL. WHEREAS SEVERAL YEARS AGO POPESCU WAS CONSIDERED BY INTELLECTUALS TO BE PARTICULARLY TOUGH, HE NOW IS REGARDED AS PERHAPS SOMEWHAT MORE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD THEM THAN BURTICA. RUMORS THAT POPESCU WOULD LOSE HIS JOB CROPPED UP IN LATE 1972 AND WERE ECHOED SUBSEQUENTLY, BUT HE REPORTEDLY HAD BECOME CEAUSESCU'S CHIEF SPEECH WRITER BY LAST NOVEMBER'S PARTY CONGRESS.

B. POPESCU'S AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITIES IMPINGE ON AMERICAN
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LIBRARY ACTIVITIES WHERE THE COUNCIL IS OUR CONTACT AND WATCHDOG,

ON USIA EXHIBIT PROGRAMS WHERE THE COUNCIL IS THE LOCAL SPONSOR, ON PERFORMING ARTS ACTIVITIES WHICH WE DEAL WITH OR ARIA WHICH IS SUBORDINATE TO THE COUNCIL. SIMILARLY ROMANIAN LIBRARY, EXHIBITS AND CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS IN THE US FALL UNDER THE COUNCIL.

C. (1) WE ARE SATISFIED WITH OPERATING CONDITIONS FOR OUR LIBRARY AND WITH THE COOPERATION WE RECEIVE FROM THE COUNCIL. SIMILARLY OUR EXPERIENCE WITH EXHIBITS HAS BEEN GOOD AND POPESCU SHOULD BE THANKED ON BOTH SCORES.

(2) SINCE POPESCU CAN BE CANDID AND EVEN BLUNT, WE THINK WASHINGTON OFFICIALS MIGHT FIND BOTH INTERESTING AND HELPFUL A DISCUSSION WITH HIM ON HOW HE SEES PROSPECTS FOR ROMANIAN CULTURAL FIGURES AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES COMING TO THE U.S. ON BOTH COUNTS THERE HAVE BEEN CONTINUING UNCERTAINTIES FOR THE PAST YEAR. CASES IN POINT ARE ROMANIAN WRITERS' PARTICIPATION IN THE IOWA WRITERS' SEMINAR (ONE OF LAST YEARS' PARTICIPANTS PETRU POPESCU, NO RELATION, NEVER RETURNED TO ROMANIA); ROMANIAN EXHIBIT IN THE US (THERE HAS BEEN TALK ABOUT A TAPESTRY EXHIBIT), AND ROMANIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE SMITHSONIAN SUMMER BICENTENNIAL FOLKLORE FESTIVALS.

(3) ALONG SAME LINES, ALTHOUGH POPESCU HAD NO DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES (THEY FALL UNDER MINISTRY OF EDUCATION), GIVEN HIS POSITION IN THE ROMANIAN HIERARCHY WE SUGGEST OPPORTUNITY BE TAKEN TO REGISTER OUR DISAPPOINTMENT OVER SUBMISSION OF ROMANIAN NOMINATIONS THIS YEAR ON TOP OF LATE ARRIVALS LAST YEAR, ALL OF THIS LEADING TO REDUCED OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMANIANS IN US UNIVERSITIES, INCLUDING THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE ROMANIAN CULTURE THROUGH THE PRESENCE OF ROMANIAN LECTURERS.

D. ONLY THEME WHICH OCCURRED TO US POPESCU MAY RAISE IS THAT OF IMPROVING WHAT HE CALLS THE QUALITY OF US PERFORMING ARTS ATTRACTIONS AND EXHIBITS. BY THIS HE USUALLY MEANS SOMETHING CLOSE TO ROMANIAN OFFICIAL TASTE OR SOMETHING ON A BIGGER SCALE (BY WAY OF EXAMPLE LAST SEPTEMBER HE SAID HE FOUND AMERICAN WEST EXHIBIT TOO SMALL AND MOST OF OUR MUSICAL OFFERINGS TOO "POP". HE WAS HOWEVER AN ENTHUSIASTIC ADMIRER OF ALVIN AILEY AND MAY EVEN ASK FOR WASHINGTON ASSISTANCE IN PERSUADING

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AILEY TO COME BACK TO ROMANIA TO WORK WITH BUCHAREST BALLET TROUPE.)

2. SEPTEL ON ECONOMIC OFFICIALS.
BARNES

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